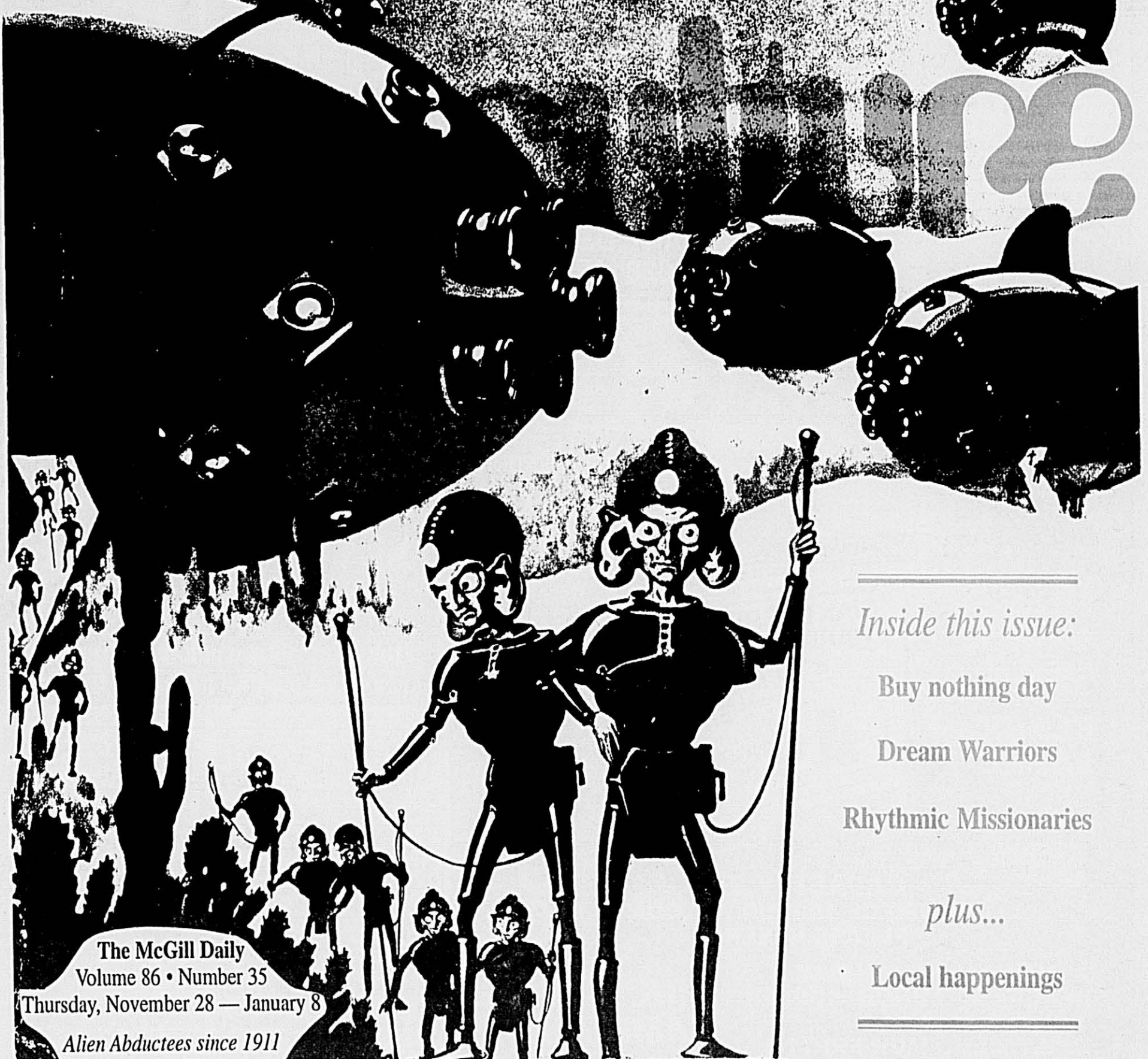


AMAZING STORIES

1/6

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The McGill Daily
Volume 86 • Number 35
Thursday, November 28 — January 8

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THE MCGILL DAILY SINCE 1911

Brain Imaging Research

The McConnell Brain Imaging Centre at Montreal Neurological Institute (laboratory of Dr. Alan Evans) is seeking volunteers for a brain imaging study.

The procedure involves a series of psychological tests, a brief neurological exam, acquisition of a blood sample and a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan. If you meet the following criteria, and would like to participate in this study, please contact Naryl at: 398-1726. Please be sure to include your name and a telephone number where you can be contacted.

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GOVERNMENT ACTION LONG

by andreamason & soniaverma

OVERDUE

It took a 3,537-page Royal Commission on Aboriginal People report to attract media and government attention to the concerns which Aboriginal leaders and activists have been struggling to voice for centuries.

The recommendations of the comprehensive report, released last week, include a formal government apology for past injustices, the dismantling of the Indian Act, the creation of a House of First Peoples, an independent tribunal to monitor land claims and increased Aboriginal control of land and resources. It has been hailed as setting a landmark precedent by Native leaders such as Ovide Mercredi and is being watched by the rest of the world.

But in the grand tradition of endless government reports, there is the potential risk that this one will fall on deaf ears. The possibility is all too real.

So far, government response has been shamefully non-com-

mittal. As usual, the 'esteemed' Liberal Ministers have relied on deficit hysteria rhetoric to justify their side-stepping of an issue which has been systematically ignored.

The Commission has called for a \$2 billion a year commitment from the federal government for the next 15 years to implement the report's recommendations.

Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin has responded by claiming that his hands are tied. He says that he is constrained by dwindling government funds, effectively passing the buck to Finance Minister Paul Martin.

Martin, in turn, has declared that the government coffers are empty. His financial bottom line has become a buffer zone divorcing public demands from the government's corporatist agenda. Any attempt to implement real change or challenge the status quo is stonewalled.

Because of this, the Commission's report risks getting lost in the bureaucratic shuffle and put on the financial backburner.

Members of the Commission realise this, which is why they have emphasised the dollars

and cents benefits of adopting their recommendations, and warned of increased Aboriginal reliance on social assistance programmes, suggesting the government adhere to their recommendations or face economic devastation.

The Commission estimates that the cost of shelving the report will be \$11 billion dollars per year in 20 years.

Martin's rhetoric has been turned on its head. It will cost Martin, and any cash-strapped finance minister who succeeds him, more money to ignore the Commission's recommendations than to implement them. Fiscal restraint cannot be used to justify the government's waffling any longer.

The Canadian government has a long, deplorable history of addressing Aboriginal issues according to an age-old formula of colonial paternalism. Aboriginal peoples have been labeled as a "problem to be solved," a "burden on society" and a "financial drain" which responsible tax-paying Canadian citizens have had to bear. Evidently, the present Liberal government has not progressed very far in its

policies. For example, Irwin favours continuing with the lengthy land claim negotiations under government supervision, rather than agreeing to the Commission's request for an independent body to oversee the process. Irwin's words recall the arguments of 17th century missionaries who contended that the 'savages' could only be 'civilised' under the careful guidance and instruction of the Europeans.

This attitude does not just exist on Parliament Hill. It resonates within Roddick gates—in our lecture halls and conference rooms, where we sometimes hear that our celebrated European ancestors did not commit genocide.

It is time to take the quantum leap into the 20th century. It is time to abandon the idea that Aboriginals are helpless, idle drunks constantly seeking more government handouts. It is time to remove the blindfold of our imperial past and recognise that Aboriginal communities know best what they need and how to improve their situation most effectively, free from government influence.

But the report is being read as a political option, rather than an obligation. Native communities are not looking for handouts—they are demanding and deserve nothing less than a complete abandonment of colonialist logic and a redefinition of the government's relationship with Native peoples.

The Royal Commission report cites an Aboriginal "baby boom" as a reason to act now. It contends that 56% of the Native population is currently under 25 years of age, and predicts a doomsday scenario of disillusioned young Natives rioting in the streets and resorting to anarchy in a desperate attempt to have their demands met.

They entice avaricious bean-counters with promises of a self-sufficient, well-educated Native population conscientiously contributing to empty government pockets.

It is understandable that the Commission felt compelled to couch its recommendations in Martin-speak but this is not why they should be implemented. They should be implemented because compensation for the historical atrocities committed by this nation are too long overdue and to ensure a viable future for Aboriginal communities.

The McGill Daily

vol 86 • no 35

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The Daily is a founding member of Canadian University Press and Presse étudiante du Québec.

Printed on 20% recycled paper.
ISSN 1192-4608

Hyde Park

Arts Faculty students face computer lab fees decision

This is an open letter to all students in the Faculty of Arts, who will pay a \$50 computer facilities fee if the Board of Governors approves a motion passed by the Faculty of Arts on Tuesday, November 19. The motion passed by one vote despite unanimous student opposition.

Student representatives to the Faculty Committee had appealed for information on the Faculty of Arts Computer Lab's (FACL) budget proposals upon finding out about the levy. We received spending guidelines the day before the Faculty meeting, almost two months after our original request. After deliberation, we concluded that we were unimpressed by the opaque and last-minute proposal. We could not accept an unaccountable spending of students' money, and we decided that consultation was required. We wanted to see the motion go to referendum, and to have student oversight of spending. The precedent for "no taxation without representation" was set two years ago with a \$49 student fee—the Arts Improvement Fund—which was approved by Arts students in a referendum and is overseen by an AUS committee with a stu-

dent majority.

At the Faculty meeting, we stated that professors could not vote for the motion in good conscience. Instead, we asked them to accept an amendment to reduce the tax to \$10 per student, which could be raised should students agree to do so by referendum. This compromise reflected our recognition of particular funding needs for FACL, such as employee training. Further procurement should follow the precedent that had been set two years earlier. We also stated that the \$1 300 rise in tuition for out-of-province students next year makes an additional \$50 even more significant.

Professors responded by giving us lectures on how each member of the Faculty has his or her own "conscience," and stated that \$10 was simply not enough money—despite only finding out about the proposals that very day! As far as conscience is concerned, we must ask: How conscionable is it for professors to pass a motion taxing students after students have seriously reflected upon the matter and rejected it? Are we simply to assume that professors know what is best for us—

that they were merely taking on a "white man's burden" in endorsing the motion?

In response to this event, the AUS Council voted unanimously to condemn the action taken by the Faculty of Arts. The AUS council also struck the 40% guarantee for FACL proposals from the Arts Improvement Fund By-Laws, and decided to take this amendment to referendum in March. We believe that students' money should be fairly allocated to services that we value, such as libraries and student departmental initiatives. If FACL gets \$250 000 without our consent, we believe that money we do control should go to other needy facilities within McGill.

Passing this motion makes a sham of the notion of a shared governing space in the Faculty. Implementation of a fee which will only impinge upon students, with students united in opposition, is unacceptable.

John Provort
AUS President

Karim Bardeesy
AUS VP Academic

cc. The Tribune

With winter break around the corner, we at the McGill Daily culture would like to thank you for reading us. Next year, please bring your friends.



p.s. don't forget to keep an eye out for next week's final news issue, and the Daily's special technology issue. It's not too late to submit. Bring your friends to that too.

KISS ME *Deadly*

Butterfly Kiss
tickles the heart
and bashes
the brain

by marknarron

On the surface, *Butterfly Kiss* may seem like just another psychotic serial killer/horror flic/road movie. But essentially it's a love story.

"I've looked up and down all these roads," says Eunice, the one-woman inquisition played brilliantly by Amanda Plummer, "...for someone to love me."

Apparently her idea of "looking for love" entails blowing the brains out of every highway gas station attendant in England. But wouldn't you know it, the one gas station attendant she doesn't kill turns out to be the love of her life, May, played by Saskia Reeves.

May, who actually narrates the film, follows Eunice through her psychotic quest in a futile attempt to make Eunice "good." But to no one's surprise, Eunice eventually wins May over to the "bad" side. "You think you'll make me good," screams Eunice, "I'll make you evil before you make me good."

The script is chock-full of references to the biblical story of Judith who decapitates her enemy while pretending to seduce him. The film suggests that Eunice sees herself as a modern day prophet, in search of Judith, her lover and her inspiration.

Wearing a dress of clinking industrial-size chains underneath her clothing, she elevates S & M to a religious self-sacrifice. "God has forgotten me," she cries, pleading for the punishment she feels she deserves.

But ridding the world of ugly British people is a thankless mission, and Eunice seems to handle the guilt well. Her victims, ranging from innocent to sleazy all seem to share one thing in common: British bourgeois dullness. Sexually repressed, shallow and stuck in the permanent rut of boring careers, *Butterfly's* victims ironically share none of Eunice and May's passion for experience or for each other. Their victims are dead before they die and seem to justify Eunice and May's lack of remorse.

"I'm sure he deserved to die," reasons May over one of the corpses. "Everyone deserves to die," responds Eunice.

And where does the love story come in? Countless driving scenes with the Cranberries in the background inadequately make up the chunk of their romance, but the remarkable acting on both Reeves and Plummer's part make their 'separation' at the end of the film

(I won't give it away) surprisingly convincing.

May obeys Eunice's every command, and proves her devotion in a final act of selflessness. Eunice, on the other hand, is too caught up in a psychotic frenzy to pay much attention to May. Eunice seems to sufficiently express her love for May by not killing her.

Butterfly's director, Michael Winterbottom seems to try to reconcile sex and murder, good and evil, sanity and psychosis, all to the sound of Dolores O' Riordan and PJ Harvey crooning about ex-lovers.

There is no narrative thrust to the film. It's beauty lies in the amusing art of composing a body count. No conclusions seem to be drawn, and the elements of the story all come to their natural endings. But the film's strongest quality is Winterbottom's symphonic collage of petrol, lust, desperation and blunt objects. The script and the dialogue are left sufficiently open-ended, leaving room for Amanda Plummer and Saskia Reeves to deliver mesmerising performances.

Butterfly Kiss is short on story but rich in scenery and tension

between the characters. It never indulges in dime store psychoanalysis in an attempt to explain why the couple are so trigger happy. Winterbottom spares us the cheap childhood trauma stories and refreshingly keeps the camera in the present. The film never loses sight of what's at stake for the characters in the now, thus creating a highly emotional film, virtually free of rational plot pushing and garbage quotes out of self-help books.

And as an emotional movie, snipping the ties to the practical world and diving desperately to Hell (Eunice knows she's going to Hell, and likes it), *Butterfly Kiss* is nothing short of depressing. But its artistry easily accommodates metaphor and is destined to be someone's favorite movie.

Butterfly Kiss is playing at Cinema du Parc until November 30

Imaging a

The poetics of Marlon Riggs

by nicholasboston

In terms of the visibility of people of colour, Image et Nation, Montreal's festival of gay and lesbian cinema, has improved considerably since last year. Flipping through the 33-page, 'graphically-correct', presentation catalogue, I find 9 images of people of colour. Discounting advertisements and repeats of the same graphic, the catalogue carries some 75 images in total. I suppose this roster is an advancement over last year's catalogue, in which the people of colour picture-count stood at a whopping 5 out of 99. When I reflect on the content of both festivals, I see that there was a rise in the actual number of films by and about people of colour, but this slight increase is lost to the marketing strategies of the catalogue which over-represents whiteness. It all depends on how you calculate progress.

Given the not-so-balanced statistics on representation at Image et Nation, it seems fitting that I should review a production called, "I Shall Not Be Removed: The Life of Marlon Riggs". The piece, three minutes short of an hour in length, is a video documentary that tracks the life and accomplishments of the innovative filmmaker,



Marlon Riggs. Riggs passed away in 1994, following a long battle with full-blown AIDS. Over the course of his career, Riggs produced and won awards for several documentary films that explore the experiences and identities of African-Americans. Most notably, his documentary "Tongues Untied", expressing the joys and sorrows of being Black and gay in America, catapulted Riggs into the heart of controversy once the film aired on PBS amid loud objections from the political and religious far right.

"I Shall Not Be Removed" bears an unmistakable likeness to Riggs' own work. The film's insistence on visual montage; its incorporation of archival footage set against poetry and song, mark it as a Riggs-inspired piece. Karen Everett, the film's director, is a former student of Marlon Riggs, and her production pays both personal as well

as artistic homage to her subject. Of the mentor who taught her the medium of documentary filmmaking at UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, Everett told reviewers, "I remember the day he revealed to us students how his first brush with death — life-threatening kidney failure — energized the making of 'Tongues Untied'. We were enraptured by the candor and the stature of this unassuming man."

This sentiment is echoed by Riggs' mother, Jean, and his life partner, Jack Vincent, both of whom speak extensively in the film about their love and respect for the deceased filmmaker.

"I Shall Not Be Removed" is very conscious of the community out of which it springs. Interviews with former Riggs colleagues and associates serve to couch the memory of Riggs in a warm interplay of anecdotes, intimate reminiscences and

candor. Several of the people who appear in the film to discuss their involvement in one Riggs production or another, are now acclaimed documentarians in their own right. Deborah Hoffman, for one, was on the production staff of "Tongues Untied." In the past year, she has released "Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter", a strangely humorous video diary chronicling Hoffman's process of adjustment to her mother's descent into the delirium of Alzheimer's Disease. The film had its Montreal premiere last year at the Jewish Film Festival.

With the incorporation of perspectives like Hoffman's, "I Shall Not Be Removed" shows Riggs as an artist at the nexus of a vibrant and involved group of cultural workers. It demonstrates his dedication to fostering an environment that favoured the critical engagement of issues surrounding identity and representation. Filmmaker Everett says, "He encouraged his students to make documentaries that are self-revelatory and which explore the experience of being 'the other', that is, at the margins of the dominant culture."

TURNING POETRY INTO MUSIC

The Rhythmic Missionaries spread the word

by irisglaser

Discard all notions of safety when approaching the jazz-poetry of the Rhythmic Missionaries. Here's a group of music-makers/image-conjurers/word-teasers that makes poetry playful and immediate. Their names should offer some indication of the fun they have with their art: "The Kosher Wolf" (Joe Neudorfer) and "Natty Chief" (Dave Neudorfer) are the mouthpieces of the poetry, accompanied by "The Fluoroscopic Kid" (Marc Steinberg) on sax, "Blackbird" (Jason Selman) on trumpet, "N.E.X.T." (Lindsey Mayors) on drums, and "Bitch Ass, the Triumph of Faith Over Reason" (Andrew Turner) on bass.

The group formed two years ago while the members were still in CEGEP. All six wrote independently but gravitated towards each other due to a common love of jazz and — hey, what's art without an audience? — an itch to perform.

The name, Rhythmic Missionaries, for those of us who are politically-minded, is not an intimation of the group's desire to convert us to some self-righteous vision. Their

ambitions are artistic, and their mission is to "spread the Word of the Rhythm," according to Joe and Dave Neudorfer.

Rhythm to these missionaries is more than a "pattern of arrangement" as defined in strict musical terms. "Living in rhythm is personal expression, doing your own thing," the Kosher Wolf explains. "You have to be living outside in rhythm, not controlled or held hostage by the rhythm of everyday life," he continues.

Rhythmic living can be found in the very artistic philosophy of this group. Each player in the performance brings his own sense of rhythm to the front, making not a jumbled heap of notes and words, but a taut dialogue of music and poetry.

The Rhythmic Missionaries can be spotted at the growing number of spoken-word events on St-Laurent, but their performances extend beyond the formulaic poetry session. They stand apart in both their ability

and willingness to create a unique form of communication between music and poetic verse. Their music is inspired by John Coltrane's idiom of "a hell of a lot of jazz," while their literary influences come from the Beat generation, Whitman, Hemingway and the surrealists. These two components of their art arouse and rally each other in a complementary relationship which ultimately cannot be separated.

"Our style has progressed from the jazz-poetry of the 1950s," the brothers assert, "there was no real relation between music and verse." The Rhythmic Missionaries' recipe for creation is to study first the feeling and sound of the poetry and then translate verse into music so that "jazz becomes the

fluff and no content. The lead poets Natty Chief and Kosher Wolf are, lest you forget, two brothers (literally) with social justice on their minds and Walt Whitman in their knapsacks. Eastern philosophy, race, gender, the responsibility of youth to be vocal, and haikus on the creative process are ingredients that lend their art cerebral substance. "Words are limited, though," reflects Joe Neudorfer (back to eastern philosophy), "so that's where the music takes over."

What future expeditions do these missionaries envision? "We'd like to organise a huge, 30-musician ensemble sometime soon," Dave says. All in all, the Rhythmic Missionaries are pretty humble guys. They are gaining increasing exposure from spoken-word events like YAWP and interviews with CKUT. Most of the members are first year McGill students who are "excited by the opportunities of a huge student population here," admits Dave. "But we're also still not in contact with many other McGill musicians."

"We're profit-

ing from the growing buzz about spoken-word and the folk resurgence of self-made books," Joe states. Die-hard fans and curious individuals can pick up a copy of a collection of Rhythmic Missionaries' poetry for a minute fee that merely covers the cost of printing. "We're in it for the fun," the Neudorfer brothers explain.

Obviously not in the poetry business to make a profit, the Rhythmic Missionaries will continue along with their basic philosophy: "To just listen and read as much as we can, inhale as many influences as possible," Dave reveals. "The greatest sin is finding your own limitations," he continues, adding "our life and our art have to be a continual process of learning and experimenting with creative expression."

Come show your interest and support for the Rhythmic Missionaries at their next event — YAWP at the Cabaret, December 13.

DAILY PHOTO BY SARAH JOHNSON



musical interpretation or incarnation of the poetry," according to Joe.

The bonus: this "Beat" poetry isn't depressing.

"There seemed to us a serious lack of upbeat attitudes at many spoken-word events," notes the Natty Chief, "and this only reinforces a negative stereotype of the poetry of young people." The Rhythmic Missionaries' message and tone is typically very positive and enthusiastic, without succumbing to the opposite extreme of the stereotype of youth: naive happiness. They believe that experience and consciousness can breed positive, hopeful art.

"Our shows try to provide positive energy to the audience," the Kosher Wolf explains. Scoff you might if you're prone to cynicism (which, in all likelihood, you are) but it's hard not to be lured into their playful mood during a performance.

This is not to say that the Rhythmic Missionaries are all

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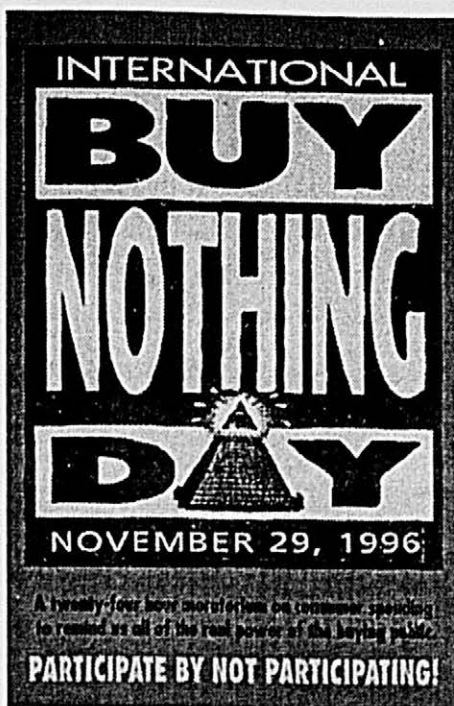
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One day to address overconsumption

by carriefreedman

Can you go a whole day without spending a penny? This Friday, people from around the world will be asked to do just that, on the fifth annual International Buy Nothing Day.

This year, Buy Nothing Day, a day in which consumers are asked to voluntarily not be a consumer for a day, has been moved to the first shopping day after American Thanksgiving, historically the biggest one-day buying binge of the year.

Buy Nothing Day is an attempt to draw attention to what many believe is the primary environmental problem of the world: overconsumption by people in the affluent, industrialised west.

Created by Vancouver resident Ted Dave as a "gesture of protest for those of us who feel as if our lives and dreams have been marketed back to us," the day has grown into a worldwide anti-consumerism campaign.

"[It's] an event geared to confront obligatory consumerism and raise awareness about overconsumption," says Concordia's Quebec Public Research Group (QPIRG).

Members of the McGill and Concordia QPIRGs are asking consumers to consider the implications of overconsumption.

"Canadians consume enough to support a population of one billion," reads a flier distributed by QPIRG. "One third [of the garbage Canadians produce] comes from unnecessary packaging to promote flashy products in stores."

Busting Ads

Part of the problem of overconsumption comes from the advertising industry itself, says Allan MacDonald, campaign manager of the Media Foundation.

"We are continuously urged through advertising to consume," says MacDonald.

With the power of advertising in mind, MacDonald's Media Foundation set up Adbusters, a magazine devoted to skewering the estimated 30,000 marketing messages North Americans are exposed to each year.

For last year's Buy Nothing

Day, Adbuster's aired "uncommercial" which advertised nothing. Instead, the "uncommercial" tried to counter the effects of other advertisements by asking viewers to give shopping a rest.

But some see the move away from consumerism as being a problem, not a solution. One caller to the Adbuster Hotline said in response to their ads, "I'm going to buy twice as much as I expected to buy...It takes dinosaurs like you to let the rest of us appreciate what we have."

According to Richard Gitter, an advertising executive at NBC,

"overconsumption may unfortunately be one of the by-products of successful societies."

NBC, ABC and CBS television networks refused to run this year's Buy Nothing Day "uncommercial" produced by the Media Foundation.

According to NBC's Gitter, challenging consumerism would be detrimental to the network.

"The advocacy of a Buy Nothing Day ...would be like shooting ourselves in the foot," says Gitter. "No business organisation ought to be asked to do that."

"By any standard, to boycott retailers and not buy anything is controversial. It goes against

the grain of the economy," concurs CBS' Matthew Margo. "If you can't see this - buying nothing - as controversial, I can't help you."

But who then, should be responsible for getting the message out? Kalle Lasn, President of the Media Foundation, believes that the networks have a public responsibility to air the ad.

"These are public airwaves. The networks should not be censoring messages like this," he said.

To Allan MacDonald, however, the core of the issue is not so much who is sending out the message, but whether the consumers will listen.

"Although the advertisers do play a big role in consumption, ultimately it is up to us. We have the decision to buy or not," says MacDonald.

The McGill and Concordia QPIRGs are holding a "swap", in which Montreal residents can exchange household goods, clothing, books even services and skills in a money-free environment. The swap takes place this Friday in the basement of the St. James Cathedral at 463 St. Catherine W. from 15h00 to 20h00. Info 276-2096 or 282-4594.

JUST A COFFEE?

Fair Trade Day urges justice over charity

by melaniefearon

Coffee, that requisite stimulant for most university students, is actually not such a benevolent substance. Traces of the harmful effects that coffee procures may not be found in the bloodstreams of the casual user, but in the lives of coffee producers, as well as in the environment and conditions in which workers live.

Coffee has been called the "world's second most important commodity in terms of monetary value, second only to oil," according to the publication produced by the Global Cooperation Network of QPIRG, *Hungry for Justice*. The opportunity for big money-making does not necessarily translate into the same opportunity for coffee producers. The wages of coffee workers are severely restricted by the world market prices which fluctuate according to supply and demand. Today, most farmers receive one third of the price for coffee that they received in 1986.

In the Dominican Republic, over 90% of the coffee market is controlled by one company. The monopolisation of the coffee industry by a small number of wealthy elite has left the country's 29,000 independent growers in a state of neglect. Government services such as roads and schools are channeled into the hands of the minority elite, not the farmers themselves.

Coffee first arrived in Europe from Arabia in the 5th century. Subsequently, the production and distribution of coffee has remained a vestige of colonialism. All 26 of the world's coffee producing countries derive over one third of their income from coffee exports.

The colonial era produced a dependence of countries and people on coffee. The invading powers introduced coffee to Latin America to support a growing demand in Europe, devoting an expansive amount of land and resources to its production. Today almost 80% of coffee comes from Latin America alone. In Africa where coffee existed as a native crop, farmers were forced to grow it for export. Although many of these former colonies have since gained independence, the installment of such agricultural and economic relations remain intact, making it difficult to diversify into other areas of agricultural production. Diversification requires capital — not a tangible reality for farmers in the South.

Direct colonialism for these post-colonies may have been dismantled by most countries, but practices that fundamentally protect the interests of the North are still very much in evidence. The poverty of the coffee workers is manifested and maintained in large part by the creation of dependence upon transnational corporations. In the United States, over 70% of the coffee industry is owned by 3 multinationals. General Foods owns 34.8% of the coffee industry, and makes Maxwell House, Yuban and Sanka; Procter & Gamble owns 31.3% and makes Folgers, and Nestlé owns 13.5% of

the industry, and makes Hills Bros., Nescafé and Taster's Choice.

Trade between countries does not have to be exploitative. Alternative Trading Organizations (ATO's) promote the idea that the exchange of products from the South in solidarity with the workers can improve the conditions under which people live. Bridgehead is an ATO owned by Oxfam Canada and buys handicrafts, coffee, tea, rice and other goods from community cooperatives in the South. The prices Bridgehead pay are set by the producers based on their estimation of a fair return for their labour according to the context of their economy. Up to 50% of their order is paid in advance so that producers can buy raw materials without going into debt.

Un Juste Café, a project operated by PIRG/GRIP McGill, Concordia and UQAM, ASEED (Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development) and ENJEU (Environnement Jeunesse) is dedicated to the dissemination of the policies of fair trade. This project would seek to offer socially responsible coffee at cafeterias and cafés both on and off campus. According to François Meloche, response among students at McGill and other universities has been "very positive." Unfortunately, Miravel failed to respond to this demand made by students and refused to allow a one-day offering of fair trade coffee at McGill cafeterias in recognition of Fair Trade Day. While Meloche recognises that Miravel has contractual commitments to its suppliers and that any negotiation with an ATO such as Bridgehead would have to be done by Bridgehead themselves, the one day offering of an alternative product does not seem such a radical proposal. A Marriot cafeteria at Concordia offers Bridgehead coffee with no "technical problems," a concern that Miravel is said to purport.

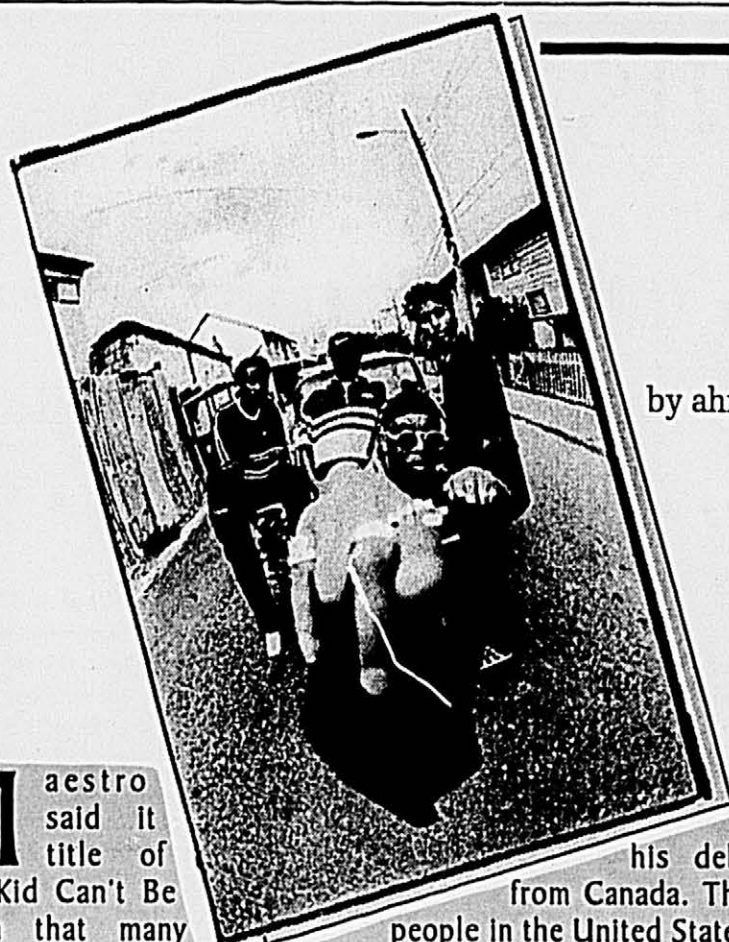
Un Juste Café is currently working on collecting signatures for a petition to present to their respective schools. Meloche also advocates asking for fair trade coffee to be offered at Second Cup and A.L. Van Houtte cafés, as well as grocery stores. Current programs like the Second Cup's "adopt-a-child from a corresponding coffee producing country program" seem just a little ill-founded when confronted with the fact that their coffee maintains an exploitative support system that they could effectively change.

Students can buy Bridgehead coffee and tea at their respective PIRG/GRIP university offices. But a better situation would be to collectively influence participants in the market system to sell fair trade products and, of course, entice their competitors to sell fair trade products as well, and so on.

Asserts *Hungry for Justice*, fair trading means that "producers get what they deserve, justice not charity."



DARE TO D



by ahmerqadeer

Maestro said it title of This Kid Can't Be action that many places had to his music, but perhaps even more that's the reaction that Canadians had to him. There is a denial in Canada of the contributions — social, artistic and otherwise — that people who are not white have made to this society. With this denial, comes a tendency to overlook the influence that Canadians have had on other parts of the world. The Dream Warriors are a testimony to this.

While they have had commercial success in Canada and elsewhere, people both here and abroad overlook what inspires and influences their music and in turn how their music inspires and influences others. The Dream Warriors are not merely catching trends that exist South of the border but have created their own music. And their music is the product of what we have in this country. All of the members were raised in Canada and live here still. What they rap about is their experiences and what they see around them — Day-in and Day-out. Fresh-Wes, The Dream Warriors, Michie Mee and LA Luv are all important and ground-breaking artists whose achievements are internationally recognised.

Yet here in Canada, art that reflects the experiences of people who are not white is given a special place as 'multicultural.' Canadian rap music, regardless of its content is said to be mimicking the trends of the United States. There is no recognition that creativity beyond that of Anne of Green Gables, the Tragically Hip and the Group of Seven exists in Canada. This has been the case even at the expense of the quality of Canadian art. Native Canadian artists of international acclaim, such as Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, have their work displayed in the Museum of Civilisation but not in the Musée des Beaux Art or the National Gallery. It is as if what they produce does not qualify as art but Emily Carr's renditions of "traditional artifacts" are.

Similarly, the racism of Jack Donahue and the Canadian basketball programme has kept some of the best players off Canada's national team. We continue to scavenge the bottom ranks of international competitions and send our best players south. Continuously the indication, whether in sport or in art, is that Canada is set on maintaining its standard as the 'Great White North.' Canadians remain so blinded by the white that they can not see the vibrancy of the communities that exist here and how they enrich society.

These questions are not merely about belonging or not belonging. It is not really important whether or not the Governor-General hands out a prize to a 'person of colour.' The point is, there is a need to reconceive what Canada is. Malcolm X used to say, "If we are part of America then part of what she is belongs to us." The same is true of Canada. This is not to say that so-called people of colour merely deserve their own piece of the pie, but rather that Canada needs to be reconceived in a way that does justice to its violent history and allows all people to shape its future. The arts is only one aspect of a greater need for this.

The Dream Warriors are not given the respect they deserve. Their music is intelligent and innovative, mixing elements of jazz, hip hop and reggae. (They were one of the purveyors of 'Acid Jazz,' working with Guru on a number of occasions.) Their most recent album, The Master Plan is a mix of dancehall and hip hop. It is another testimony to the creativity and originality of The Dream Warriors and the cultural and artistic dynamism that is around us. The Daily recently had the opportunity to talk to Spek about the album and the development of The Dream Warriors.

Fresh-Wes all in the his debut album, from Canada. That's the re- people in the United States and other

Daily: So, you're from Montréal?

Spek: Yeah, I am, I am.

D: That's what I thought.

S: Were you at Van Gogh's (McGill's India-Canada Students Association party)?

D: What was it?

S: Van Gogh's — they had the ICSA dance — I was up there.

D: Brown Sugar — you went to that?

S: Yeah, I was there.

D: How was that?

S: It was wicked! It was fun.

D: So are you in Toronto now?

S: No, I'm in Montréal these days.

D: And you were born here?

S: I was born and raised in Montréal. I grew up in Repentigny outside of Montréal, then for high school I moved up to St. Léonard, which is like Little Italy, and as of recently — the past five years — I've been living up here in the West Island. Yeah, so I was born and raised up here until I finished high school then I went to Toronto and now I'm back here.

D: So what did you listen to growing up?

S: Growing up? At different stages in my life I was listening to different things. Before I got into hip hop I was listening to Bon Jovi and Def Leppard and stuff like that. And then a friend of mine turned me onto hip hop — I was listening to it at the time but I wasn't a hip hop head — then I started listening to a lot of De La Soul, a lot of 3rd Bass and stuff like that. Lately I've been listening to a lot of stuff like Soundgarden, a lot of classical Indian music, a lot of Qawalis — everything from Stevie Wonder to Radiohead.

D: When did you start writing?

S: I was always writing poetry in school, but I didn't see it as an extension of rap at the time. Like I said, this one friend of mine turned me onto it and then I started writing raps which started when I was about 14.

D: How did you hook up with The Dream Warriors?

S: I met them at a concert which was up here in Montréal, and it was their second show in Montréal.

D: This was after the first album there?

S: Right, this is during the first album. During the first album they did one show and then about two months later they did a second show. I was at the second show. I actually met them at an autograph session at HMV and I told them — one of the guys who had organised their first

show in Montréal was a friend of mine — so I told them, "You guys know this guy J." And they were like, "Oh yeah, I remember him — he hooked up the last show." So we started talking and it was like 18 and over — it was being done at the Terminal Showbar — I was like 14 or 15 at the time. So I told them, "I'd like to come to your gig but I'm under-age." And they were like, "If you want to come down, show up a little early — the show starts at 10, show up at seven or eight or something — hang out with us, we'll be waiting out front and let's hook up." So I

There is no recognition that creativity beyond that of Anne of Green Gables, the Tragically Hip and the Group of Seven exists in Canada.

was like, yeah, cool, okay! For me, it was like the first time meeting a music group that I listened to, so I was ecstatic. Sure enough they were there and we hooked up and exchanged numbers — I rapped for them and they were like, "I like your voice, I like your style" and all that. So we stayed in touch. After, what we would do is, I was in a group at the time, a group called Mama Tongue, and what we used

DREAM
WARRIORS
THE
MASTER PLAN

DREAM

An interview with Spek of The Dream Warriors

to do is just go up once every month or two months and just cut demos. After that, me and my partner broke up, and we both went on solo missions and Dream Warriors continued to produce me as a solo artist, and then we decided to record a few songs together while they were recording songs for their second album. They had already recorded most of the songs but we recorded three or four songs together. Those songs made it to the album and they just said, why don't you stay with [the] group, and so I did.

D: Is it the same kind of story with Luv?

S: Yeah, Luv was actually one of the guys I met while they were touring. He wasn't an official member of the group at the time but he was always in the

ever get signed.

D: Before even Maestro Fresh Wes?

S: Yeah, before Maestro. And this girl Michie Mee, she did songs with MC Lyte and she hooked up with Queen Latifah. She was one of the original female MCs of the old school generation. Anyway, it was Michie Mee with LA Luv as their DJ, and they brought in Lou as their back-up guy, and at the time that's when Lou was just forming Dream Warriors. After Michie Mee and LA Luv kind of dwindled, Lou and Luv were so used to touring together, Lou was like, "Why don't you tour with us?" And even though Dream Warriors was Lou and Q, Luv was always there as a silent member. Then they just made it official after I joined.

"We try to express things we go through every day. I mean Day-in and Day-out is the ultimate testament to that. The formula hasn't changed."

— Spek, The Dream Warriors

group basically because he started out in a group called Michie Mee and LA Luv, right, which is like an old school Canadian hip hop group. They were one of the first hip hop groups from Canada to

D: Who came up with the idea of recording some of this album in Jamaica?

S: We all did kind of. Basically at the beginning we wanted to mix this album with heavy bass. We wanted to make sure that the album was pumpin' — we had been kind of selfish on our last two albums in the sense that we created a lot of the albums just strictly for us and as much as we did that on this album as well, we wanted to get past the kids who were listening to the lyrics at this point or the experimentalness of the music. We wanted to get to the jeep noddors, the clubs, you know what I mean. We wanted the stuff to be bankin', so we said where can we go to mix this? We were thinking New York, we wanted to hook up with Bob Powers or somebody like that, and our manager was saying he remembered mixing some old school stuff with Michie Mee down in Jamaica. Nobody knows better than Jamaicans, how to mix bass. I mean, that's where reggae comes from. We looked into it and basically we had the chance to work with some people who had created reggae music that we've all loved for years. We worked with guys who mixed Supercat, Shaggy, Shabba, Bounty Killer, Beenie Man — you know, all these people. So we just wanted to be like let's do it. So we went down. We spent the next few weeks in Jamaica which doesn't hurt. And it was a nice experience.

D: How did you hook up with Beenie Man and those guys?

S: What we did was we went down to

Jamaica to mix one song first, just as a test mix, to see if this is really where we want to mix the entire album. So we went down to mix one song. It wasn't me at the time — I was in Sri Lanka at the time — [it was] Luv and Lou and our manager. While they were

down there they had recorded "Soundclash," but without Beenie on it. It was three verses of Lou and he was doing the chorus in kind of like a Beenie style. We had always said that it would sound good with Beenie on top of it — but we were just kind of like dreaming. Then we hooked up with these guys, and these guys were like, "Yo I just mixed a song for Beenie last week, I'll give him a listen to it, I'll pass the tape over to him." So they passed the tape over and we got a call saying, "Yeah man, Beenie loves the track, it's dope and he wants to hook up."

So we hooked up next time we were in Jamaica to mix the entire album. We went back about a month after and we

The Dream Warriors are not given the respect they deserve. Their music is intelligent and innovative, mixing elements of jazz, hip hop and reggae.

just hooked up.

D: So how have you been perceived on tour in different places? Are people like, what's this Sri Lankan kid doing on stage?

S: It's eclectic, it's different, but I find that it has always been pretty positive. The Asian community is extremely supportive of Asian artists out there, because I guess there is a lack of Asian artists out there. It's almost like a novelty; it's different, so people love it.

D: Even in the States?

S: In the States, we haven't been down that way much. My experience has only been with the last album [Subliminal Simulations] and the last album was my

first album. So when we went to the States on the last album, we went there mostly for press — we didn't do many



gigs up there. And near the beginning of the release of the album, we had problems with the label up there. Our label had a misunderstanding with its distributor, which is EMI. And our label was Pendulum, which had Digable Planets, Boogie Monsters, Lords of the Underground and stuff like that. Since they had that kind of fall out with their distributor, Pendulum went under. Therefore, it severed the careers of Dream Warriors, Digable Planets, Boogie Monsters and Lords. So all of our albums went under.

We had different options; different labels were like, "We want to pick up your album and release it, continue the work where Pendulum left off." We just felt like the album was a little old and stuff so we just said, "You know what — hold off for now." Let us go in and record a brand new album in a few months. So we just did it. By that time in the second album, we were already thinking about what kind of sound we wanted to create for the next album. That was what this album is. A little bit more bassy, a little bit more head-nodding and shit like that. So that's what we were thinking, and that's what happened. Right now, Priority Records picked us up and that's our label in the States. And we doubt very much that they are going to go under. These are the guys that broke Dr. Dre, Ice Cube, Ras-Kas — it's just a bad-ass label.

D: So where do you find some of the inspiration for what you write for?

S: Life. Just life in general, we try to express things we go through every day. I mean Day-in and Day-out is the ultimate testament to that. The formula hasn't changed. I don't think there ever was a formula, it was just kind of like what you do on a day-to-day basis reflects what you are, your moods, feelings and the things you're going through reflected into music. And that's what we have always tried to do. And Luv comes with the music that brings the vibe across.



happenings...

IF YOU'RE FEELING CULTURALLY STARVED THIS DECEMBER, AND HAVE NOT YET RESOLVED YOURSELF TO WASTING THE WINTER AWAY IN HIBERNATION, HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS TO WEAN YOU OFF THE DAILY CULTURE AND BRIGHTEN UP THE EVER-SHORTER DAYS. ALTHOUGH THIS IS SADLY THE LAST '96 CULTURE ISSUE, YOU NEED NOT MOURN AS WE HAVE A WEALTH OF EVENTS AND GOING-ONS PROPOSED TO DIG YOU OUT OF THE WARM NEST OF THE LIBRARY AND RESTORE YOUR SENSES FROM GOLD/EXAM-INDUCED NUMBNESS...

Sing, monkey, sing

KaraOBORoke at Oboro artists' centre, December 13

In his meditation on karaoke in *THIS Magazine*, writer/musician Andrew Cash proclaimed it a populist phenomenon, because anybody can participate, thereby bringing music to the people. Whether or not that's the complete picture — the music that it does bring to the people is still a largely narrowly-defined, mass-produced commodity — Oboro is hoping that, at least for their benefit karaoke shindig, anybody and everybody will participate. After all, as the saying goes, if you can walk, you can dance, and if you can talk, you can sing.

The artist-run gallery, which consistently exhibits some of the most innovative work in the city, will be providing all the necessary stuff to "unleash the superstar dormant in you." According to Daniel Dion, one of the centre's coordinators, more than 1,200 songs will be available. Although the selections run "more on the pop side — Elvis, Pavarotti, jazz standards" (which is a better definition of 'pop' than HMV works with), there will also be some culled from the Montréal Philippino and Japanese communities.

In fact, aside from the "fun(d)raising" aspect, one of the main focuses for the night will be to bring together karaoke enthusiasts from different cultural and artistic communities. In particular, participants should brace themselves for a few rounds of amateur belting from local curators. The evening will begin with prepared performances and shift into impromptu, off-the-floor performances later in the night, open to all attendees. Scheduled, real-life performers include performing artist Nathalie Derome and drag artist Johnny Bryan.

In addition to the "super mega 'interactive music station,'" props, costumes, wigs and a make-up artist will be on hand to allow the dormant superstar to truly shine. Dion jokingly suggests, "You can even dress up as a priest if you want to sing Madonna." As for local crooner Céline Dion (of which Daniel Dion is no relation), "she will probably be up there in some form or another."

— Kevin Siu

KaraOBORoke is happenin' at Oboro artists' centre (4001 Berri, room 301) on Friday, December 13. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. Info: 844-3250.



this intergalactic quartet have released 22 singles and six LPs throughout their four year existence.

On *Experiment Zero*, Man or Astroman?'s second full length for Touch and Go, their innovative "Next Phase" of ear-splitting technology is fully realised. Recorded "deep under the Earth's crust" by tech guru Steve Albini (Battlestar Shellactica), the album uproots surf experimentation by providing sensory level destruction within the cosmic ionosphere. Like teleportation, our physical mass becomes immediately altered while guitarist Starcrunch defaces satellite orbits with his pummeling chord changes. Drummer Birdstuff pounds out surf rock with cosmic accuracy, keyboardist/effects robot, Coco the Electronic Monkey Wizard spits out space cruisers for lunch, and bassist Dexter X infiltrates the enemy starships.

According to the band, "If an Earth human heard one of the Next Phase records today, he or she would die." Even if this seems intimidating, you will never realise how pulverised the universe has become, unless you see them live. But don't tell them I mentioned the "Next Phase," because apparently the human race is not yet "ready for it."

— Jonah Brucker-Cohen

Man or Astroman? is happenin' (with Delta 72 and Catherine) on Monday, November 9 at the Cabaret (2111 St. Laurent). Tickets are \$8.78 plus taxes (which probably equals a round number).

Better than the Three Tenors

Da Capo Productions' Opera Gala at the FACE Auditorium, November 29

Reflecting on its successful annual Broadway revue, somebody at Da Capo Productions wondered, "Why don't we do opera?"

So this year, in addition to the Broadway revue (which will be held in February), Da Capo is offering an opportunity to sample, in the words of producer Peter Phoa, "some of McGill's terrific singers and some of opera's stunning moments." In fact, the gala will feature over 25 current and former McGill voice students and music by Bizet, Delibes, Handel, Mozart, Puccini and Verdi, among others.

A non-profit theatre company run by McGill students, Da Capo Productions, in its two year existence, has been pretty successful in fulfilling its mandate of "presenting professional-caliber theatre." The company's last production, Stephen Sondheim's *Assassins*, was extremely well-received by critics and hoi polloi alike, warranting excited reviews in the *Mirror* and the *Gazette*, and selling out almost the entire run. This year, Da Capo is tackling Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*, an undertaking that will be a little more financially ambitious. This time, they're having a longer run in a larger theatre, and costuming will require more than just the simple jeans of *Assassins*. Da Capo is anticipating that *A Little Night Music* will cost twice as much as *Assassins*.

Although Da Capo has applied for funding from foundations and corporations, Phoa explains, "they're usually interested in more established companies, not students." It seems even the tobacco companies aren't doing their job; DuMaurier requires arts funding applicants to have been incorporated for at least two years (Da Capo is not incorporated). Which makes Friday's Opera Gala, in this climate of ever-decreasing arts funding, even more worthy of your hard-earned cigarette money...

— Kevin Siu

Da Capo Productions' Opera Gala is happenin' at the FACE Auditorium (3449 University Ave.) on Friday, November 29, 20h. Admission is \$8 for students/seniors and \$14 for adults.

When you hear it, you will die

Man or Astroman? at the Cabaret, December 9.

Amid the genre of aging surf rock bands comes a relatively young group with a prolific discography and enough radiation to make Three Mile Island look like a bad case of gas. Hailing from Atlanta, Georgia (a city owned by The Coca-Cola Company), and currently signed to the Chicago based label Touch and Go Records,

KARA OBORoke



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EVER HEARD OF A POLITICAL ALL-FEMALE CHOIR?

Choeur Maha CD launch at Galerie Isart, December 11

The 30 female members of Choeur Maha, the Montréal choir formed in 1991, know what diversity is about. The women, who will be launching the choir's first CD on December 11, come from different backgrounds and places when they meet during their spare time to "make beautiful music," according to director Kathy Kennedy. Single mothers, psychologists, students, grandmothers and artists are represented in the choir, and "they're all crazy," says Kennedy in reference to the amount of hard-to-come-by time the women devote to the choir. "They're all givers," she adds.

Undoubtedly, the members of Choeur Maha get a lot out of their musical commitment, one which is a supportive environment of friends. Their musical repertoire reflects their various interests, ranging from medieval music to gospel and Motown.

"I had a dream of what we could do, repertoire-wise," says Kennedy, who formed the group with various women she knew through her vocal workshops. "It was obvious there was a need for it."

Not surprisingly, the all-female choir is approaching the making of music in a less than traditional way. "A lot of our work is highly collaborative. It's a political approach to group work and music. And musically, there's nothing remotely like it," Kennedy says.

The December 11 launching of the CD, *Different Angels*, is being dedicated to the 14 women who died seven years ago at the Ecole Polytechnique massacre. In the five years since the choir was formed, it has held a concert every December to commemorate the women, and this year's CD launch, says Kennedy, is a chance to show some positive effects "of the kind of solidarity that has come about through the commemoration of Dec. 6."

— Idella Sturino

Choeur Maha's *Different Angels* CD launch is happenin' at Galerie IsArt (263 St-Antoine St., corner of De Bleury) on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 17h. Admission is free.



Nipple-tweaking and inter-culturally speaking

CKUT Benefit Birthday Bash at Galerie IsArt, November 30

People who come to the 9th annual CKUT birthday bash will not only be contributing to the well-being of the radio station, but will also be witness to what host Rima Banerji calls "a provocative and eclectic mix of multi-disciplinary performances." The cabaret/all night party-extravaganza is, according to artistic director of the event Salman Husain, "representative of the communities that CKUT serves and will be a kaleidoscope view of what it means to be Québécois." That means it is going to be inter-cultural, diverse, and on the edge of the Montréal art scene. Some even claim that it is the "po-mo Shanghai" event of the city (alluding to predictions that Shanghai is the world's up and coming New York, of course). In other words, be there.

Some enticing performances include Jonathan Goldstein's *10,000 Ejaculations* and other spoken word works, Sabastian Yeung's innovative dance theatre synthesising classical ballet and contemporary dance, and Harry Wheeler and Ryan Murphy's duo presenting a thing called 'sports theatre,' which is a whole new kind of interactive theatre. Groupe Culturel Montréal Serai will perform *The Black Skirt* which insiders say is going to be intensely political in nature and followed by other similarly intense performances.

The cabaret will be followed by the hyper-stimulating After-Party with DJs DXTR X, Khalid M' Seffer, Butcher T, and Donald D. The techno, funk and hip hop will keep this cultural revolution raging until the After-Party Midnight Show. This final étape of the triad of events will include a homage to Josephine Baker by Audley Coley and "Jihad" Maxime St-Juste's French rap.

Banerji comments in regards to the event, "I expect there to be a great turn out and if you don't come you are missing one of the biggest cultural events of the year."

Oh yeah, recommended attire is high glam, so be there or, well, you know...

— Meredith Cohen

The CKUT Bash is happenin' at Galerie IsArt (263 St. Antoine W.) on November 30, 19h30-4h30. Admission is \$5, and \$8 after 22h30.

Music, story-telling, poetry — crazy stuff!

Perfect Waste of Time at Bistro 4, December 9.

If December is looking a little bleak, cold and broke, here's a budget-friendly event guaranteed to warm you up with some hot debates and friendly sounds — and improve the quality of your precious procrastination. Perfect Waste of Time (PWOT) is having a second anniversary gala launching of its impromptu 'zine with a multi-performance event featuring music, poetry and storytelling. Some confirmed acts include singer-songwriter Zöe Whitthall, the cosmic sounds of Starbean, poetry performance by Officious Little Students, story time by Scott Duncan and Exhaust, which can only be hazily described as "macro-dub infection with tape samples..."

The 'zine — a patchwork of colourful articles written on the fly and visually evocative collages — centers around a personalised approach to The Big Issues. This second annual edition of PWOT promises to bring you a deluxe "four pages instead of two" masterpiece that should make the chilly trip double worth your while.

— Noémi Tousignant

The Perfect Waste of Time second anniversary gala is happenin' at Bistro 4 (St. Laurent) on December 9, 20h.

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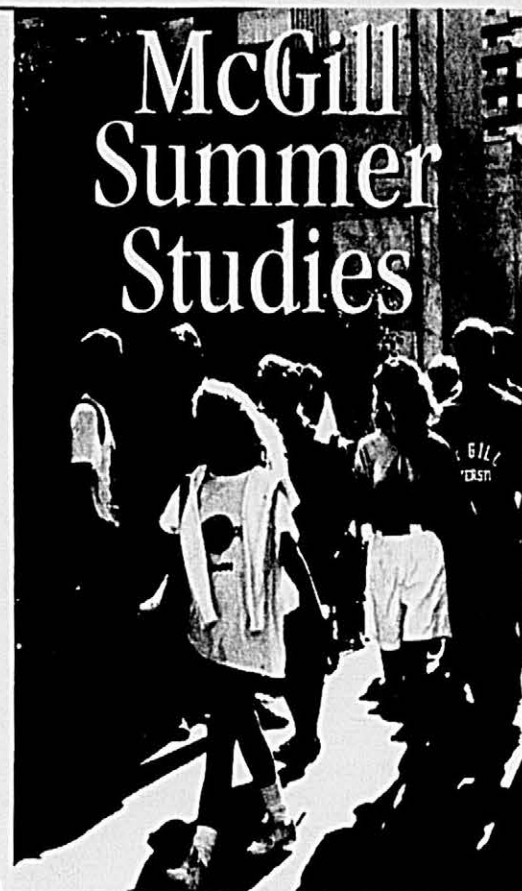
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Red in the face

Jab Jab Plays Balattou

by andrea cooke

'Jab Jab', a carnival character from the Caribbean, originates from the Creole pronunciation of the word 'diab'le'. On carnival days, people dress up as Jab Jabs, and cover themselves with painted grease and oil as part of the festivities.

"During carnival time in the Caribbean there will be 20 to 50 Jab Jabs walking around in the streets. Everybody does it — plumbers, judges, janitors, male and female. Everybody is the same during the carnival," explains André Whiteman, the bassist and back-up vocalist of Montréal-based band Jab Jab.

André and his brother Ross (lead singer and guitarist), who grew up in Grenada, and Wayne Stout (drummer), who grew up in Trinidad, started playing together in 1977 in New York, where they met. During these initial stages of their musical career, they played rock 'n' roll. "As I was growing up in the Caribbean, I was influenced by

British Rock. It wasn't until I heard Bob Marley's music that I was influenced by Caribbean music," explains André Whiteman.

The band went through many names, settling on Jab Jab in 1983, while it gradually began a switch to Caribbean music. Now based in Montréal, Jab Jab play a mix of music, mainly calypso, soca and reggae. There are traces of African rhythms in their songs, derived from Soukous and Zouk, and they are influenced by music from around the world.

The members of the band are all full-time musicians. They write their own music and their talent really shows in the complexity of the musical arrangements in the songs on their first album, *Jump up and Jam*, especially "Bush Tea." They are presently working on their second album.

Their song "King Mandela" is a celebration of the accomplishments of Nelson Mandela in South Africa. I asked André Whiteman if any of Jab Jab's songs had any spiritual significance. He said that the majority of their songs did not; however, "King Mandela" was a political song and it had its own unique importance.

On the night of the group's performance at Club Balattou on Tuesday, November 19, it was below zero and snowing outside. But within the walls of the venue, the beat of the Caribbean music warmed the atmosphere.

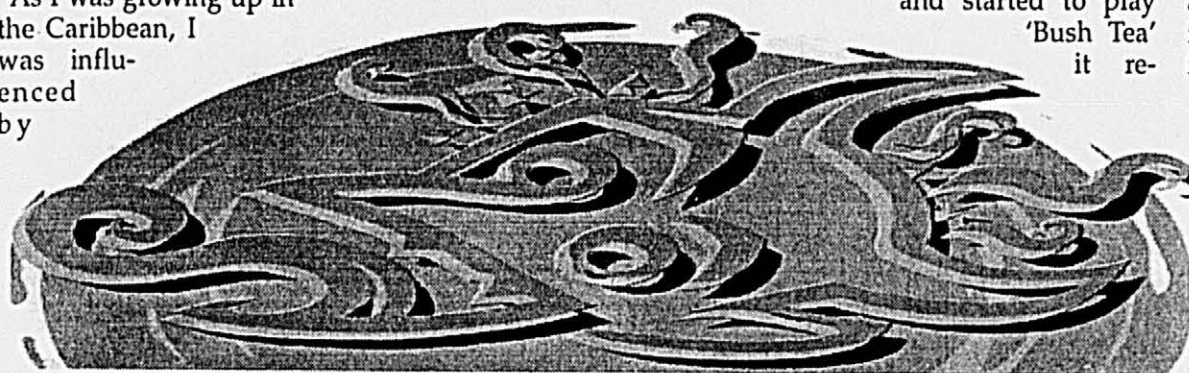
Appearing on stage as the Jab Jab Carnival characters, with their faces painted red, black and white, the group opened their set with "Bush Tea" and proceeded to play all the songs from *Jump up and Jam*.

When Jab Jab came out on stage with their faces painted and started to play 'Bush Tea' it re-

ally made me realise the incredible difference between seeing music performed live and simply listening to a recording. These guys have energy and they transfer it to the audience through their music. I closed my eyes and I was no longer in Montréal. I didn't have exams to study for. I was in the Caribbean at a music festival, and all I could do was dance to keep up with the rhythms. In one word, the show was incredible. Music is magic. If you think about what it really is — just a bunch of sound waves that connect with an eardrum — it is amazing the amount of power it has to affect how a person feels.

The band does not play regularly in Montréal, so anyone who likes music with a Caribbean flavor to it should definitely catch Jab Jab when they do perform, usually at Club Balattou, or Charlie's American Pub.

Club Balattou is situated at 4372 Boul. St-Laurent. They have live international music every Tuesday and Wednesdays, providing a valuable space in Montréal for musicians of different cultural backgrounds to play their music. Info: 845-5447.



GIRLSPIT OFF AND RUNNING

Women's open mic rocks Montréal for a second time

by marni levitt

Girlspit, the sequel, happened last Saturday at warehouse Hotel2Tango on Van Horne. For those of you who don't know, Girlspit is a women's open mic forum for chick singers, performance artists, storytellers, rockin' screamin' babes, loud-mouth bitches, quiet poets, or any woman wanting to share her work in a supportive, inspiring environment. Never fear, the event is boy-friendly, and not exclusive to women.

This time around Girlspit was combined with an Image & Nation queer dance party. After the girls were through performing, the DJs cranked up the tunes and everyone had a blast dancing.

Girlspit is the brainchild of Zöe Whittal, student singer/

songwriter, activist and organiser extraordinaire. While she was in San Francisco, Whittal noticed that there was a cool women's event called Sisterspit, and decided there should be something like it in Montréal.

And here it is. It has already happened twice; the first time at Bistro 4, and the second, well, you know, I already told you.

This Girlspit seemed to come at just the right time, as winter began to creep in, and

before exams and final papers for the students. It warmed up Saturday night with laughter, art, politics, inspiration and fun.

Whittal felt that both the performers and audience members were attentive, receptive and supportive of each other.

Particularly memorable was Alex Boutac's fiery and passionate pieces about identity, love, racism and survival, especially the piece she performed with her lover of

seven years.

Elaine O'Connor and Tanya Evanson energised Girlspit with lively, animated spoken word. Evanson captivated the audience for 20 minutes with piece after piece weaving themes of humanity, biracial politics, racism, gender, womanhood, life and spirituality. Her food metaphors and use of melodic song stand out in my mind. All in all, Girlspit was a chance for women to share, to network about other places to perform, and to have a good time.

Other performers at last Saturday's performance spat about rape, finding lovers, interracial politics, sex work, self, and lots more girlstuff. Punk band Dorothea even did a tribute to *The Golden Girls* with a cover of

"Thank you for Being a Friend."

There is nothing else like Girlspit in Montréal. There was a women's spoken word series at Bistro 4 for eight weeks, but there has never a music-based open mic space for women.

The next Girlspit, with MC Dana McCloud, will be in January and will feature Lisa Gamble, singer/songwriter of acoustic punk, or aggressive folk, or whatever you want to call it. (It sounds good, though, and that's what matters.) For the February show, Whittal hopes to focus on girlbands. Girlspit will happen once a month throughout the year.

For more information call Zöe Whittal 848-7431

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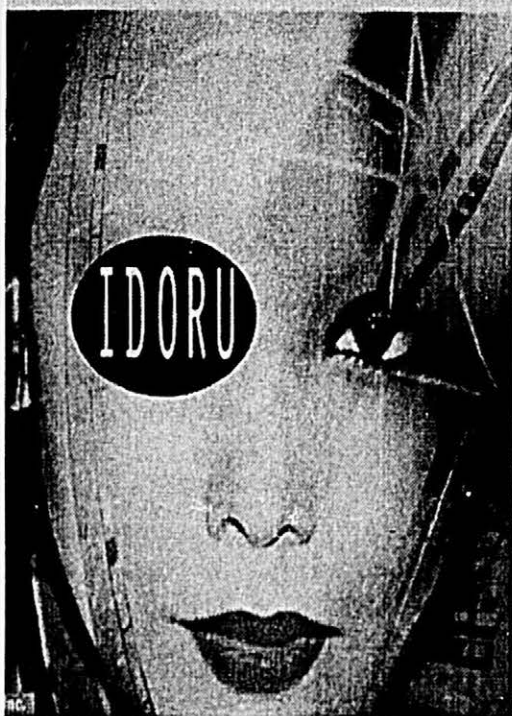
DIFFERENT TALES OF THE FUTURE

by iranayman

TWO NEW CYBERPUNK NOVELS IN STERLING'S HOLY FIRE AND GIBSON'S IDORU

FROM THE VISIONARY CREATOR OF
CYBERSPACE AND VIRTUAL REALITY

William Gibson



William Gibson always said that his futuristic novels were really based on what he saw going on around him in the present. Taking him at his word, what do we find?

As somebody who began writing in the early 1980s, his work seems to have inherited the paranoid, anti-government (and anti-big business) agenda of the 1970s. In fact, stripped of their hi-tech gloss, his novels are really westerns, with the lone gunslinger (the "console cowboy") facing down the corrupt town establishment.

Ho hum.

Bruce Sterling (who, along with Gibson, John Shirley and Rudy Rucker, was one of the fathers of cyberpunk science fiction) started around the same time, with the same legacy, but quickly moved away from action-based narratives into explorations of future societies and the effects of new technologies on individuals.

Both authors have new books out, and the differences are instructive.

Gibson's *Idoru* centres around an extremely popular rock star who announces he's going to marry the title character, a rock idol who has millions of fans worldwide even though, inconveniently, she is a software package. The story involves a 14 year-old fan of the rock star who is sent to Japan to discover whether the rumours of his im-

pending marriage are true, and a man who has the ability to look at vast quantities of data and intuitively pull meaning out of them, who is hired by the rock star's minder to determine whether or not he's gone insane.

Holy Fire, Bruce Sterling's new novel, is about a woman in her 90s who is given the opportunity to undergo a medical procedure which would allow her to be resurrected in the equivalent of a 20 year-old body. After undergoing the procedure, she flees the matronly "medical-industrial" establishment to Europe, where she meets a series of bizarre, Bohemian characters.

Idoru contains a typically fragmented Gibson story, with the two strands developing alongside each other. Unfortunately, we know almost from the

beginning that the two strands will merge, so there isn't a lot of tension in the unfolding of the plot.

By way of contrast, Sterling's story is more typically straightforward by comparison, with a single, linear plot. Yet, the reader is constantly surprised by the unfolding events of the narrative.

In Sterling's future, medical science has given people who can afford it much longer life spans; having had much more time to accumulate wealth, the older population controls the economy, shutting out most young people, leaving them with bleak prospects for the future. A large part of the novel is taken up with the ways in which various young people cope with this problem. Unlike Gibson, who is content to reflect current technological advances using stale action/adventure plots, Sterling reflects current social situations through technology.

In *Idoru*, Gibson is playing with the idea of celebrity, but, since he's more interested in action than theme, he doesn't seem to have a particularly interesting

point to make about it. (In fact, the ending of the book suggests that enough money and threats of physical violence will solve any problem, a strange idea coming from an author who seemed to be against big business in his *Sprawl* trilogy.) Ster-

ling had a more interesting take on celebrity in his second novel, *The Artificial Kid*. (Actually, the best take on celebrity I ever saw came from Don DeLillo, in the novel *Mao II*, when one of his characters suggested that the only true celebrities were terror-

ists because they were the only people who could actually cut through the media clutter and reach an audience.)

Another major difference is that Sterling has a better grasp of character. *Holy Fire* is also largely about the main character's emotional growth, how she must come to terms with her unique situation. *Idoru*'s main character, not deeply drawn to be-

gin with, does come to some understanding of himself by the end of the novel, but that's not an integral part of the developing story. (I find it interesting that, for a writer who is fascinated by East Asia, Gibson's main characters are always white males; Sterling, on the other hand, has had female protagonists in *Holy Fire* and *Island in the Net*, arguably the best book of the cyberpunk genre.)

As you would expect, both authors speculate about the future of currently emerging technologies; Gibson, for instance, fills out a much more expansive form of virtual reality. Both authors have scenes featuring the latest techno-fad: nano-technology. (Gibson talks about buildings being constructed from the ground floor up, sort of like candles melting in reverse; Sterling has a computational pool of water you can actually breathe in.) When it comes to technological inventiveness, both authors are among science fiction's best.

William Gibson's *Idoru* is a fun, fast read. Bruce Sterling's *Holy Fire* is a fun read that you can come away thinking from.



The Pillar became Twitch...

by jessicalim

...But now it's not

Those of you wondering what has happened to the supposedly bi-weekly *Twitch*, wonder no more. The new rag-style literary magazine, twice published this year, is not dead, but merely laying low and accumulating funds until their next issue in January.

Twitch was originally intended to replace the annually released *Pillar*, providing instead an ambitious bi-weekly literary magazine. However, co-editor Greg Michner says, "The *Pillar* has started up again, [and] *Twitch* [is now] something completely separate."

Independently run and lacking funds, *Twitch* has been operating on money from its editors, and couldn't continue, because they too have to eat. However, the magazine is looking for other financially-supportive outlets. "We're vying for part of the budget from DESA (Department of English Student's Association)," explains Michner, "and we'll have fundraising events."

The magazine, an anything-goes project, is intended to stimulate students to write, draw and express their tormented souls seething with sexual repression. Although *Twitch* has boasted a few notable pieces (particularly Mike Corbett's short and arresting poems, which display a resonating combination of wit and dark humour), the quality of the magazine on a whole has been mediocre, which can only be attributed to the lack of submissions.

"People just don't submit. At the outset of the [project] we thought people would be more interested," laments Michner. "The *Pillar* is experiencing the same thing. It's too bad that people aren't writing."

Aspiring to have its popularity rise by word of mouth, distribution has proven to be problematic for the magazine, in that the majority of students still think *Twitch* is a form of pre-exam anxiety. Granted, it has only been released twice, and one cannot expect a ubiquitous buzz about the magazine immediately. However, this hiatus cannot be a positive influence on *Twitch*'s popularity either, unless of course the magazine is hoping to capitalise on the resurgence phenomenon that has proven an asset for 'punk' music, and independent films.

The apathetic attitude of the student body with regards to the lack of submissions can only result in a second-rate magazine with potential. Nevertheless, the passionate *Twitch* editors, refusing to be discouraged by insufficient funds and interest, will "give it a shot in January."

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EVENTS EVENTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28

• **Financial PCOC meeting**, 18h30 in the Shatner building, room 107/108.

• **Playwrights' Workshop**, in association with the Native Friendship Centre of Montréal (2001 St. Laurent), hosts an evening with Daniel David Moses. Admission by donation, Info 843-3685.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29

• **"The Eyes of the Smiling Cow Singers"**, an evening of folk music at the Yellow Door (3625 Aylmer). Open stage to follow. 20h, admission \$3.

• **The McGill Choral Society** presents Faure's Requiem, 19h30 at the Erskine and American United Church (Ave. du Musée, corner of Sherbrooke). Tickets available at Sadie's or at the door: \$5 for students/seniors, \$7 for adults.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30

• **Words for Women / Paroles des Femmes**, the YWCA's literacy programme, hosts its first annual Celebrity Auction. Items on display beginning at 11h, bidding will begin at 13h. Info 866-9941.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

• The Concordia Women's Centre holds a ceremony to commemorate the Dec. 6, 1989 massacre of 14 women at the Ecole Polytechnique, and a safe space to share and mourn. Simone de Beauvoir Lounge (2170 Bishop St.), 13h, doors close at 13h30. Women only. Info 848-7431.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

• **JHUST (Jews for a Humanist Secular Tradition)** will host a gala Hanukkah Party featuring The Bagg Street Klezmer Band at Centre Greene (1090 Greene Ave. in Westmount, one block below Dorchester) 18h-22h. Info 484-5033.

• **Deadline for donations to the NDG Food Depot/local businesses food drive.** The drive is collecting non-perishables for the annual preparation of Christmas baskets for the region's needy. Donations can be dropped off at various locations on campus, or at the Food Depot (2121 Oxford St, near de Maisonneuve), or at local grocery stores.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

• **St. James United Club (1145 Union Avenue, Metro McGill)** holds a special Christmas dinner. Donations go to Dans la rue.

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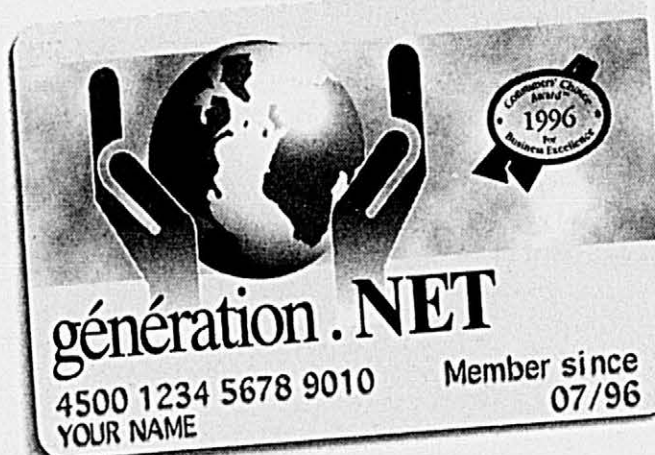
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